



¡Salud Sol!

HCHS/SOL Newsletter

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Hispanic Community Health Study (HCHS) / Study of Latinos (SOL)

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Meet Dr. Robert Kaplan...

Dr. Robert Kaplan (Associate Professor at Albert Einstein College of Medicine) leads the Bronx HCHS/SOL team. He is an expert in heart disease and also an HIV/AIDS researcher. Dr. Kaplan has ten years of experience doing research in the Bronx population. His prior studies identified reasons for poorer health outcomes in Hispanic and Latino patients in the Bronx and Puerto Rico compared with other groups.

Per Dr. Kaplan, *“Our studies showed that Latino patients with heart disease tended to have less favorable medical outcomes than non-Latinos. Lack of health insurance, language barriers, and high rates of depression were part of the explanation, but these things did not tell the whole story. On the other hand, for many Latino patients being a member of a tight-knit community appeared to have a positive effect on health.”*

Dr. Kaplan is the proud father of his two-year old daughter Lucy and his son Henry, born February of this year. After Henry's birth, Dr. Kaplan went with his family to live and work for two months in Corozal, Puerto Rico. During his visit, he presented information about the HCHS/SOL at the University of Puerto Rico. He hopes to help researchers at U.P.R. create a "sister study" to HCHS/SOL that will compare the health of the stateside and island Puerto Rican populations.



Dr. Robert Kaplan

Why do we ask you what you eat?

While you are at SOL, we ask you a lot of questions. Some are about what you eat. We are interested in knowing how what you eat affects your health. We will ask you what you ate the day before or what you eat over a longer period of time. Please take our phone call when we call you to ask about what you eat.

YOU DO NOT NEED TO CHANGE WHAT YOU USUALLY EAT FOR THE SOL STUDY.

Also, the **Food Amounts Booklet** that the nutrition interviewer may give you is only to help you estimate how much food you eat.

YOU DO NOT NEED TO WRITE DOWN WHAT YOU EAT

If you have any questions, please feel free to call us at **1-718-584-0513.**



Dr. Yasmin Mossavar-Rahmani
Co-Investigator, HCHS/SOL

Asthma in the Hispanic / Latino Community

What is asthma?

Asthma is a chronic disease of the lung and is caused by a decrease in the flow of air to the airways. Asthma is a growing health problem in the United States. The symptoms of an asthma attack include:

- **Coughing**
- **Wheezing**
- **Tightness in the chest**
- **Shortness of breath**



What are the causes and risk factors?

Asthma occurs in persons with a tendency to develop the disease. A person's genes and things in the environment put them at increased risk. There are many things that can cause or worsen asthma attacks. These include:

- **Contact with grass, weed, pollen from trees, cats, dogs**
- **Infections of the lung caused by a virus**
- **Things that cause the airways to become red, swollen and tender, such as exposure to tobacco smoke and certain things in the environment**
- **Lack of education about the disease**
- **Limited access to health care services**

Who gets Asthma?

People can develop asthma at any age but it usually starts in childhood. In the US and New York City (NYC), more women have the disease than men. Asthma affects about 22 million Americans and almost 6.5 million of them are children. People living in communities with low income have a higher rate of asthma than those living in wealthy communities. Asthma affects Hispanics/Latinos and African Americans more than any other groups.

How does asthma affect Hispanics/Latinos?

In the United States, about 2 million Hispanics/Latinos have asthma. The Bronx has one of the highest asthma rates in the country resulting in three times more deaths from asthma than the entire country, five times more hospitalization, and hospital admissions much higher in the Hispanic/Latinos communities than those of wealthy areas in the city because Hispanic/Latino adults usually live in lower income communities which expose them to higher levels of harmful things in the environment.

Can I prevent my asthma symptoms?

Currently there is no cure for asthma but there are many things you can do to reduce the symptoms once you have the disease. These include:

- **Learn and understand your asthma and ways you can manage it**
- **Avoid things that can make your asthma worse such as dust, pollen, cats, dogs etc.**
- **Exercise regularly**
- **Visit your doctor for regular checkups; follow your doctor's instructions; and use medications as directed**

How do I manage my asthma?

Medical management of your asthma depends on how severe the disease is and is aimed at reversing your symptoms. Your health care provider may stress treatment for long-term management of your asthma through inhaled medication from a pump in order to help you:

- **Prevent your symptoms from getting worse**
- **Maintain normal or close to normal lung function**
- **Help you continue normal activity levels**
- **Experience little or no reaction while receiving medications**

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For updates on
upcoming
activities please visit
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